

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A method for the separate authentication of a document template and of user data inserted therein, comprising the steps of:
  - a) providing the document template, said document template being adapted to receive said user data therein, said document template having a corresponding template ID and template Document Authentication Code based on said template, hereinafter referred to as DAC(t), linked thereto, said DAC(t) providing for the authentication of the document template by itself;
  - b) inserting the user data in the document template;
  - c) extracting the user data from the document template;
  - d) generating a user data Document Authentication Code, hereinafter referred to as DAC(d), based on the user data, said DAC(d) providing for the authentication of the user data separately from the document template; and
  - e) storing the template ID, the DAC(t), the user data and the DAC(d) in an Approval Data Packet, hereinafter referred to as ADP.
2. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein step a) comprises the substeps of:
  - i) generating the document template;
  - ii) creating the template ID;
  - iii) creating the DAC(t); and

iv) storing the template ID and the DAC(t) in a location linked to the document template.

3. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 2, wherein substep a)iii) comprises generating the DAC(t) from a one-way hash function.

4. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 2, wherein, in substep a) iv), the location linked to the document template is inside said template.

5. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 2, wherein, in substep a) iv), the location linked to the document template is a linked storage system.

6. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein step e) further comprises encrypting the ADP.

7. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising an additional step f) of reconstructing an authenticated complete document, said complete document including the document template and the user data.

8. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 7, wherein step f) comprises the substeps of:

i) retrieving the template ID and the DAC(t) from the ADP;

ii) opening the document template corresponding to said template ID;

iii) generating for said template a new template Document Authentication Code, hereinafter referred to as DAC(nt);

iv) comparing the DAC(nt) with the DAC(t), and proceeding only if the DAC(nt) is equal to the DAC(t);

v) retrieving the user data and the DAC(d) from the ADP;

- vi) generating for said user data a new user data Document Authentication Code, hereinafter referred to as DAC(nd);
  - vii) comparing the DAC(nd) with the DAC(d), and proceeding only if the DAC(nd) is equal to the DAC(d); and
  - viii) inserting the user data in the document template.
9. (Currently Amended) A method for the separate authentication of a document template having entry fields and user data inserted into said fields, comprising the steps of:
- a) selecting a template ID and a corresponding template Document Authentication Code based on said document template, hereinafter referred to as DAC(t), linked to the document template, said DAC(t) providing for the authentication of the document template by itself;
  - b) entering the user data;
  - c) linking the user data to the fields of the document template;
  - d) generating a user data Document Authentication Code, hereinafter referred to as DAC(d), based on the user data, said DAC(d) providing for the authentication of the user data separately from said document template; and
  - e) storing the template ID, the DAC(t), the user data and the DAC(d) in an Approval Data Packet, hereinafter referred to as ADP.
10. (Original) The method according to claim 9, wherein step b) further comprises prompting the user for the user data.
11. (Original) The method according to claim 9, wherein step e) further comprises encrypting the ADP.

12. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 9, further comprising an additional step f) of reconstructing an authenticated complete document, said complete document including the document template and the user data.

13. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 12, wherein step f) comprises the substeps of:

- i) retrieving the template ID and the DAC(t) from the ADP;
- ii) opening the document template corresponding to said template ID;
- iii) generating for said document template a new template Document Authentication Code, hereinafter referred to as DAC(nt);
- iv) comparing the DAC(nt) with the DAC(t), and proceeding only if the DAC(nt) is equal to the DAC(t);
- v) retrieving the user data and the DAC(d) from the ADP;
- vi) generating for said user data a new user data Document Authentication Code, hereinafter referred to as DAC(nd);
- vii) comparing the DAC(nd) with the DAC(d), and proceeding only if the DAC(nd) is equal to the DAC(d); and
- viii) inserting the user data in the document template.

14. (Currently Amended) A method for the separate authentication of a document template and of user data inserted therein, comprising the steps of:

- a) providing the document template, said document template being adapted to receive said user data therein, said document template having a corresponding template ID and template Document Authentication Code based on said template, hereinafter referred to as

DAC(t), linked thereto, said DAC(t) providing for the authentication of the document template by itself;

- b) inserting the user data in the document template;
- c) generating a complete document Document Authentication Code, hereinafter referred to as DAC(c), based on the document template with the user data therein, said DAC(c) providing for the authentication of said template with the user data inserted therein;
- d) extracting the user data from the document template;
- e) generating a user data Document Authentication Code, hereinafter referred to as DAC(d), based on the user data, said DAC(d) providing for the authentication of the user data separately from said document template; and
- f) storing the template ID, the DAC(t), the user data, the DAC(c) and the DAC(d) in an Approval Data Packet, hereinafter referred to as ADP.

15. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 14, wherein step a) comprises the substeps of:

- i) generating the document template;
- ii) creating the template ID;
- iii) creating the DAC(t); and
- iv) storing the template ID and the DAC(t) in a location linked to the template.

16. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 15, wherein substep a)iii) comprises generating the DAC(t) from a one-way hash function.

17. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 15, wherein, in substep a) iv), the location linked to the document template is inside said template.

18. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 15, wherein, in substep a) iv), the location linked to the document template is a linked storage system.

19. (Original) The method according to claim 14, wherein step f) further comprises encrypting the ADP.

20. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 14, further comprising an additional step g) of reconstructing an authenticated complete document, said complete document including the document template and the user data.

21. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 20, wherein step g) comprises the substeps of:

- i) retrieving the template ID, the DAC(t) and the DAC(c) from the ADP;
- ii) opening the document template corresponding to said template ID;
- iii) generating for said document template a new template Document Authentication Code, hereinafter referred to as DAC(nt);
- iv) comparing the DAC(nt) with the DAC(t), and proceeding only if the DAC(nt) is equal to the DAC(t);
- v) retrieving the user data and the DAC(d) from the ADP;
- vi) generating for said user data a new user data Document Authentication Code, hereinafter referred to as DAC(nd);
- vii) comparing the DAC(nd) with the DAC(d), and proceeding only if the DAC(nd) is equal to the DAC(d);
- viii) inserting the user data in the document template;
- ix) generating for the document template with the user data therein a new complete document Document Authentication Code, hereinafter referred to as DAC(nc); and

x) comparing the DAC(nc) with the DAC(c), and proceeding only if the DAC(nc) is equal to the DAC(c).

22. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 20, wherein step g) comprises the substeps of:

- i) retrieving the template ID, the user data and the DAC(c) from the ADP;
- ii) opening the document template corresponding to said template ID;
- iii) inserting the user data in the template;
- iv) generating for the document template with the user data therein a new complete document Document Authentication Code, hereinafter referred to as DAC(nc); and
- v) comparing the DAC(nc) with the DAC(c), and proceeding only if the DAC(nc) is equal to the DAC(c).

23. (Currently Amended) A method for the separate authentication of a document template and of user data inserted therein by multiple users, comprising the steps of:

- a) authenticating a document template and user data from a first user according to the method of claim 14; and
- b) for each subsequent user of the multiple users, performing the substeps of:
  - i) retrieving the document template and the DAC(c);
  - ii) inserting user data from previous users in the document template;
  - iii) generating for the document template with the user data from previous users therein a new complete document Document Authentication Code, hereinafter referred to as DAC(nc);

- iv) comparing the DAC(nc) with the DAC(c), and proceeding only if the DAC(nc) is equal to the DAC(c);
- v) inserting data from the current user in the document template;
- vi) generating a DAC(c), based on the document template with the user data from the previous users and current user therein;
- vii) extracting the user data from the previous users and current user from the document template;
- viii) generating a DAC(d), based on the user data extracted in step vii); and
- ix) storing the user data, the DAC(c) and the DAC(d) in the ADP.

24. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 23, further comprising an additional step c) of reconstructing an authenticated complete document, said complete document including the document template and the user data from all of the multiple users.

25. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 24, wherein step c) comprises the substeps of:

- i) retrieving the template ID, the DAC(t) and the DAC(c) from the ADP;
- ii) opening the document template corresponding to said template ID;
- iii) generating for said document template a new template Document Authentication Code, hereinafter referred to as DAC(nt);
- iv) comparing the DAC(nt) with the DAC(t), and proceeding only if the DAC(nt) is equal to the DAC(t);
- v) retrieving the user data and the DAC(d) from the ADP;

- vi) generating for said user data a new user data Document Authentication Code, hereinafter referred to as DAC(nd);
- vii) comparing the DAC(nd) with the DAC(d), and proceeding only if the DAC(nd) is equal to the DAC(d);
- viii) inserting the user data in the document template;
- ix) generating for the template with the user data therein a new complete document Document Authentication Code, hereinafter referred to as DAC(nc); and
- x) comparing the DAC(nc) with the DAC(c), and proceeding only if the DAC(nc) is equal to the DAC(c).